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(Original Signature of Member)

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To direct the Secretary of Defense to enter into a contract with an eligible institution to carry out research and education activities relating to military painting.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. FINKENAUER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Defense to enter into a contract with an eligible institution to carry out research and education activities relating to military painting.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Military Readiness and
5 Cost Savings Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The Bob Stump National Defense Author-
2 ization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107–
3 314), which passed with broad bipartisan support,
4 established an Office of Corrosion Policy and Over-
5 sight within the Office of the Under Secretary of
6 Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment. The office
7 was created to “oversee and coordinate efforts
8 throughout the Department of Defense to prevent
9 and mitigate corrosion of the military equipment and
10 infrastructure of the Department”.

11 (2) Corrosion of the equipment and infrastruc-
12 ture of the Department of Defense (referred to in
13 this section as the “Department”) is expensive and
14 impedes military readiness. According to a study
15 commissioned by the Department’s Office of Corro-
16 sion Policy and Oversight, corrosion costs the De-
17 partment \$20.6 billion annually across all services.
18 These costs comprise 21 percent of the Depart-
19 ment’s total maintenance costs across all services.
20 Corrosion is responsible for 11 percent, or roughly
21 1.1 million, of all non-available days for Department
22 assets.

23 (3) Chemical-agent-resistant-coatings, which
24 help to protect military vehicles and equipment from
25 chemical and biological weapons and severe environ-

1 mental conditions that cause corrosion, can range in
2 price from \$100 to \$800 per gallon. With approxi-
3 mately 3,760 assets of varying sizes painted at a
4 typical Department depot per year, such coatings
5 comprise a significant annual cost category for the
6 operation of the facility and the maintenance of mili-
7 tary assets, according to analysis from the South-
8 west Research Institute.

9 (4) Military painter training and certification
10 helps reduce waste and rework of military assets, re-
11 ducing the costs associated with the application of
12 chemical-agent-resistant-coatings. For example, one
13 military painter training and certification provider
14 helped Letterkenny Army Depot use 8,100 fewer
15 gallons of such coatings per year, saving the depot
16 \$500,000 per year through improved transfer effi-
17 ciency and reduced rework, according to the South-
18 west Research Institute.

19 (5) The Senate Report accompanying S. 1519
20 (115th Congress; the National Defense Authoriza-
21 tion Act for Fiscal Year 2018) included language
22 recognizing the importance of military painter train-
23 ing, noting that “paint training programs can save
24 the Department time and funding resources by using
25 advanced technology and equipment along with

1 hands-on training to effectively apply coatings and
2 reduce waste. Additionally, increasing coating trans-
3 fer efficiency and preventing corrosion and rework
4 can improve asset readiness”.

5 (6) Investing in military painter and coating
6 training and certification programs helps improve
7 military readiness, increases safety for service mem-
8 bers, and reduces paint costs. It is prudent for Con-
9 gress to invest in research that will foster innova-
10 tions in those areas.

11 (7) The importance of corrosion resistance goes
12 beyond Department assets. Across nearly every sec-
13 tor, corrosion is expensive and poses a safety risk to
14 users. For example, decaying roads and bridges cost
15 the United States economy \$5,000,000,000 a year,
16 according to the National Association of Corrosion
17 Engineers. Congress has a duty to pair Federal in-
18 frastructure investment with corrosion management
19 to ensure new and existing public infrastructure is
20 built to last.

21 (8) The proper application of anticorrosion
22 coatings requires a high degree of knowledge and
23 skill. According to the International Union of Paint-
24 ers and Allied Trades, a poorly executed corrosion
25 prevention project will leave an asset unprotected,

1 increase costs to repair or replace all or parts of it,
2 and irresponsibly use taxpayer dollars. Using trained
3 and certified painters is the most effective way to
4 ensure assets are truly protected from corrosion.

5 **SEC. 3. NATIONAL CENTER FOR MILITARY PAINTER TRAIN-**
6 **ING AND APPLIED RESEARCH.**

7 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Chapter 131 of title 10,
8 United States Code, is amended by inserting after section
9 2228 the following new section:

10 **“§ 2228a. National Center for Military Painter Train-**
11 **ing and Applied Research**

12 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense, acting
13 through the Director of the Office of Corrosion Policy and
14 Oversight, shall seek to enter into a contract with an eligi-
15 ble institution under which the institution will carry out
16 the functions described in subsection (c).

17 “(b) DESIGNATION.—The Secretary shall designate
18 the institution that is awarded a contract under subsection
19 (a) as the ‘National Center for Military Painting and Ap-
20 plied Research’ (referred to in this section as the ‘Center’).

21 “(c) FUNCTIONS.—The Center shall—

22 “(1) serve as a testing facility for the applica-
23 tion of new paint coatings developed by industry-
24 leading research and development facilities;

1 “(2) partner with industry to assess the efficacy
2 of specific blends of chemical-agent-resistant coating
3 powder on certain military assets to assure max-
4 imum cost efficiency, coating effectiveness, and qual-
5 ity finish;

6 “(3) expand training and certification programs
7 for military painters to covered facilities that have
8 an ongoing, unmet need for such programs;

9 “(4) develop new teaching tools, which may in-
10 clude the use of virtual reality technology to enable
11 trainees to simulate the painting of a variety of mili-
12 tary assets;

13 “(5) develop online learning modules for train-
14 ing military painters in the use of liquid and powder
15 coatings;

16 “(6) explore the adoption of automated painting
17 technologies while recognizing that the repair of cer-
18 tain military assets is best performed manually;

19 “(7) provide on-site consultation and technical
20 assistance at covered facilities to maximize cost effi-
21 ciency, quality assurance, and operational effective-
22 ness in painting and coating operations; and

23 “(8) conduct outreach to servicemembers at
24 covered facilities, in coordination with Department
25 of Defense and any appropriate skilled labor organi-

1 zations, employers, and industry organizations with
2 specialties in corrosion and painting, to raise aware-
3 ness of military painter career opportunities and any
4 related industrial and commercial painting appren-
5 ticeship opportunities for Veterans.

6 “(d) CONTRACT PROCEDURES.—A contract under
7 subsection (a) shall be awarded in accordance with full
8 and open competition (as that term is defined in chapter
9 1 of title 41, United States Code).

10 “(e) PROVISION OF SERVICES FOR COAST GUARD.—
11 The Secretary of Defense may enter into an agreement
12 with the Secretary of the department in which the Coast
13 Guard is operating under which the Center may provide,
14 with or without reimbursement for the cost thereof, train-
15 ing and other assistance to the Coast Guard in accordance
16 with subsection (c).

17 “(f) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than September
18 30 of each year covered by the contract under subsection
19 (a), the Center shall submit to the Director of the Office
20 of Corrosion Policy and Oversight a report that describes
21 the progress of the Center in carrying out the functions
22 described in subsection (c), including the progress of the
23 Center in—

24 “(1) expanding training programs for military
25 painters; and

1 “(2) conducting applied research relating to
2 military painting.

3 “(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 “(1) The term ‘eligible institution’ means an
5 entity that—

6 “(A) as of the date of the enactment of
7 this section, provides military painter training
8 programs that lead to a certification that is rec-
9 ognized by the Department of Defense;

10 “(B) demonstrates the ability to establish
11 sustainable military painter operations at mul-
12 tiple covered facilities, including on military
13 bases and depots;

14 “(C) has a proven ability to scale a mili-
15 tary painter training program to meet the needs
16 of multiple covered facilities, including by devel-
17 oping or expanding a certified train-the-trainer
18 program;

19 “(D) demonstrates experience in devel-
20 oping and managing a military painter training
21 and certification program that has proven suc-
22 cess in achieving cost savings and unit readi-
23 ness through training in the prevention and
24 control of corrosion; and

1 “(E) possesses the facilities and equipment
2 necessary to conduct applied research on the ef-
3 ficacy of military paint composites and coatings
4 and the transfer efficiency of such composites
5 and coatings.

6 “(2) The term ‘covered facilities’ means—

7 “(A) the facilities of the Department of
8 Defense, including the facilities of—

9 “(i) the armed forces;

10 “(ii) the reserve components, includ-
11 ing the National Guard; and

12 “(iii) the Army Corps of Engineers;
13 and

14 “(B) subject to an agreement under sub-
15 section (e), the facilities of the Coast Guard.

16 “(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
17 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this sec-
18 tion—

19 “(1) \$2,000,000 for fiscal year 2020; and

20 “(2) \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021
21 through 2023.”.

22 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
23 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting
24 after the item relating to section 2228 the following new
25 item:

 “2228a. National Center for Military Painter Training and Applied Research.”.